Ephrata Chruch Music.

FROM THE CHOR, GESAENGE, A. D. 1754. FIRST PIECE IN THE BOOK.

How deep within us hidden lies,
That noble branch and tree of life;
How many toils and cares arise,
Until we find that hidden state:
Wherein the branch is seen to glow,
And opens Paradise again:
He that is taught of God will know.
His soul shall heavenly bread obtain.

And should the tree in beauty glow
And heavenly light be thrown around
And fruit upon its branches grow,
Such as in Paradise are found.
Still must the root remain to stand
Here in this world of sin and death,
Where there is pain on every hand,
Until the last expiring breath.

To look upwards brings with it pain
To him who clings to things of earth
And though the branches beauty gain
And life and strength is springing forth,
Yet can the root no light shed forth,
Since it is hidden out of sight
And should a dew moisten the earth.
It still remains concealed from light.

When flesh and blood will roses break,
It turns to earth the twigs to find;
Where curse and thorns it overtakes;
And pain torments the loving mind.
Since man this does not fully know,
That life blooms in eternity
And things of earth cannot bestow,
A life divine from pain set free.

Hence wisdom has contrived a plan,
To send her glories down to earth;
That long were unto man,
But now anew are breaking forth,
And pressing on in streams of light;
To plant anew an heavenly mind
Her path shall be our chief delight,
So shall we full redemption find.

—*Conrad Beissel.*

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The Three-fold Character of the Godhead.

In the following article, I wish to show 1st, God is triune—one composed of three. 2nd, man is triune. 3rd, triune man occupies a triune relation with triune God, and then let you draw your own inference. I do not say the Godhead is composed of three persons, or three principles. This is not essential to the point I am unfolding.

God is triune One composed of three. The first passage of Scripture shows there is more than one in the DIVINE BEING. "In the beginning God, created the heavens and the earth." Gen. 1: 1. The Hebrew word ELOHMI is used, and not ELOAH. The former is plural, the latter is singular. As the plural is used it must mean, that there is more than one in the Godhead. The passage literally translated, would read: "In the beginning GODS created the heavens and the earth."

Richard Watson in his theological institutes says: "That the word is plural, is made certain by its being often joined with adjectives, pronouns, and verbs plural, and yet when it can mean nothing else than the true God, it is generally joined in its plural form with verbs singular;" for instance, BARA ELOHMI, *the Gods created.*

Dr. Samuel Wakefield in his Christian theology says: "This name is plural throughout the whole first chapter of Genesis, where it is so often employed, and in a thousand other places. In fact it is rarely used in the singular Eloah. The pural is preferred even when the design is to assent, in the solemn manner, the unity of God. Thus, 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God. ELOHAYNU, *our Gods* is one Lord.'" Deut. 6: 4.

2. The Scripture relating to the creation of man proves the plurality of the DIVINE BEING. "And God said, "Let *us* make man in *our* own image, after *our* likeness." Gen. 1: 26. Adam was created, and disobeyed God. Then the Lord said: "Behold the man is become as *one of us.*" Gen. 3: 22. Evidently plurality is here taught, "Let *us* make," or "*one of us*" teaches that there is more than one in the Godhead," literally we would read: And *Gods* said, "Let *us* make man in *our* own image, after *our* likeness."

Dr. Vail, a prominent student of Hebrew, at an exegetical conference held at Chautauqua, said: "Let us make man in our own image! Is not that very singular, that the Lord should use the plural number? So I am inclined to think. I have no private opinions, brethren, about the Scriptures, but I am inclined to think that this plural number does represent the fact of the plurality of persons in the Godhead. I think there is some foundation to sustain that doctrine in this singular etymological fact—that the names of God are in the plural number, especially in that passage, 'Let us make man in our own image.'"

3. The Scripture relating to God's interest in man, and man's interest in God, proves the plurality of the DIVINE BEING. The children of Israel, fearing another flood, built a tower. There was danger in the work, and God said: "Go to, let *us* go down, and there confound their language." Gen. 11: 7. To be consistent we must believe plurality is here taught. When the people said: "Go to, let *us* build a city." Gen. 11: 4, we believe more than one was engaged in the building. And when the Lord said: "Go to, let *us* go down, and their confound their language," we must believe there was more than one engaged in confounding.

God is not only interested in man, but He would have man interested in Him. Hence He says, "Remember, now thy creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." Eccl. 12: 1. ETH BOREKA, *thy creators.* "Remember now thy creator." This corresponds with, "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." John 1: 3. And Paul says: "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him." Col. 1: 16.

That Christ with God created and are our creators seems evident. A plurality created the world. A plurality created man. A plurality directed man in his work, and a plurality would be remembered by man.

Thus far nothing is said about the number in the Godhead, whether two or a dozen is not mentioned. We only find that there is more than one, but now we have the three-fold character intimated.

1. The three fold character of the DIVINE BEING is proclaimed in the benediction which the Lord gave the children of Israel through Moses. "And the Lord spake unto Moses saying, speak unto Aaron, and unto his sons saying, on this wise shall ye bless the children of Israel, saying:

> The Lord bless thee and keep thee;
> The Lord make his face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee,
> The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace."

This benediction, beautiful in language, attractive in thought, and comforting in fact, may be found in Num. 6: 24-27.

It may have been forshadowed in Abraham's day when "the Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre." Gen. 18: 1. Having with him two companions, the three divine visitors were a blessing to Abraham. A son was promised which made the old man glad. One of the visitors remained with Abraham, while the other two went towards Sodom to work for the salvation of its inhabitants. Possibly typical of the fact that God remained with his people, Son and Holy Ghost came to earth on missions of salvation. This however is theory, but it is a fact that Christ was one of the three. He said to the Jews: "Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, he saw it and was glad." John 8: 56. And this blessing which made Abraham glad, was handed down through this three-fold benediction, to every Jewish son and daughter.

This benediction had Christ in it. The second part reads: "The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee," make his face to shine upon thee. Did God want to annihilate every Jew who saw him, for the Lord said to Moses: "Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me and live." Ex. 33: 20. Yet the benediction says: "The Lord make his face to shine upon thee." It must be through Christ. Paul says: "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. 4: 6.

Matthew Henry commenting on this benediction says: "That the name of Jehovah is three times repeated in it, and each with a different accent, in the original; the Jews themselves think there is some mystery, and we know what it is, the New Testament having explained it, which directs us to expect the blessing from the *grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of the Father, and the communion of the Holy Ghost*, each of which persons is Jehovah, and yet they are 'not three Lords, but one Lord.'"

2. The three-fold character of the DIVINE BEING is set forth in the vision Isaiah had. The scene of the vision was the holy place of the temple, or the place of the HOLY ONES. Isaiah saw the Lord on a throne. Above it was the six winged seraphims, "And one cried unto another and said, holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of his glory." Isa. 6: 1-3. Here is a triune act of adoration by triune equiped beings, and the Lord responds in the plural. "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, whom shall I send, and who will go for us." Isa. 6: 8. Here are three holy ones forming the Godhead, the ONE "Lord of hosts." Let us see:

You will of course admit that the assertion above includes the *Father*, who created and rules. It must also include the *Son*, if there is any truth in John's word. In speaking of Christ he says: "These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him." John 12: 38, 41. It also includes the *Holy Ghost.* Paul, like John, referring to this vision said, "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our Fathers, saying," etc. Acts 28: 25-27.

Here is evidence, hard to combat. The vision is in the place of the *Holy Ones.* The adoration is in the plural. The Lord responds in the plural. John says Christ was seen, and Paul says the Holy Ghost was there. Evidently the Divine Being was one composed of three.

3. That the DIVINE BEING is *limited* to three is clear from the baptismal formula given by the Lord Jesus Christ. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, all power is given unto me in heaven and earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world, Amen." Matt. 28: 18-20. Matthew wrote his gospel about six years after Christ went home, and here in this important command, obedience to which, makes heaven possible, the Godhead is limited to three. And this limitation is in harmony with his own baptism. There was a triune manifestation of the divinity. "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straight way out of the water, and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matt. 3: 16-17. Here is a three-fold union. The Savior fulfilling all righteousness, the spirit of God consecrating, and God the Father acknowledging. And these three are ONE.

4. That the DIVINE BEING is limited to three is clear from the number engaged in the work of salvation. These are three, viz., Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Christ said: "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." John 6: 44. God does the drawing through the Holy Ghost by use of the word. Paul says: "Therefore I give you to uuderstand that no man speaking by the spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." 1 Cor. 12: 3. The Father through the Holy Ghost leads men to acknowledge the divinity of Christ, who said, "Him. that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." John 6: 37. The Father draws, the Spirit leads, the Son receives. These three are one in the great work of salvation.

5. That the DIVINE BEING is limited to three is clear from the apostolic benediction, which is the Jewish benediction under another form. "The